THE FRONTIER

A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

EDITED BY
PHILIP MAIRET AND ALEC VIDLER

NOVEMBER 1952
Vol. III No. 11

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THE
FRONTIER
A CHRISTIAN COMMENTARY ON THE COMMON LIFE

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Monthly Letter

REFLECTING upon the pronouncements made this autumn at the annual meeting of the British Association, we were again struck by increasing concern of scientists to keep the public warned not to expect them to answer questions outside their own domain. The presidential address of Professor A. V. Hill this year was by no means the first to mention the dependence of scientific progress upon spiritual guidance if it is to benefit humanity. But his was the first explicitly devoted to and entitled, " The Ethical Dilemma of Science." In effect, his speech passed this dilemma, or most of the duty of coping with it, over to government. The particular instance that he dwelt upon is the responsibility of the medical and other sciences for over-population in many parts of the world: a problem that could be paralleled by others less sensational. It is already fairly familiar, but Professor Hill outlined it again with the authority and clarity of a trained scientific mind. According to our best scientific and statistical information, the half-famished myriads of Asia cannot be fed, nor their lot improved, by the provision of more scientific facilities for living. Such assistance may only deepen the people's poverty by multiplying their numbers as it has done for some generations past. It is all very well to hope for great benefits from science applied in the right conditions and

under appropriate moral restraints. But in fact we have opened up large areas of life in which humane scientific efforts will be self-frustrating unless other things are done which science gives no reason to anticipate and much reason not to expect.

The Ethical Aspect

Professor Hill reminds us that nothing has given such ethical prestige to science, or made men feel so great a duty to promote and extend its work, as the power it has given us to save and prolong human life. As he does not say, men might very conceivably have done better to welcome science for the enrichment of human life more than for the power to increase the quantity and length of it—for are people necessarily better for being in bigger crowds or happier for living longer? (Some of us, at least, suspect that man may have lived more vividly and intensely when few were expected to live so long!) However that may be, it is true that much of the finest and most devoted work for science has been inspired by the hope of saving life and defeating death. Is even this, as the Professor seems to feel with something like despair, now to be mocked by the realization that in the actual circumstances its very success is leading multitudes straight to starvation, to the loss of soil and capital and the danger of civilization itself? "If ethical principles deny our right to do evil in order that good may come, are we justified," he asks, "in doing good when the foreseeable consequence is evil? . . . The dilemma is real, and cannot be resolved by any simple expedient."

Whose Dilemma?

Now, there is a certain ambiguity in the case stated here, which the speaker partly realized. A moral dilemma can exist only where people are responsibly engaged. Actual scientists and administrators carrying out epidemic control or hospital work in, say Borneo, are in direct contact with

the people whose lives they are saving. It is not only hard, but just impossible, to imagine one of them getting a conscientious objection to his work during famine, flood or epidemic because of a conviction that in the interests of the future nature had better be allowed to take its course. Even if in quiet moments of impersonal reflection, he entertained intellectual doubts about his work they would hardly be moral doubts. Nor can one conceive of the leaders of a missionary society dropping their medical services upon such grounds; or of a research scientist, on the track of a discovery in tropical medicine, feeling he ought to give it up. Where, then, is the dilemma located? Nowhere else, we submit, but in the political and sociological sphere where people read the World Food and Agriculture reports, and react with plans such as President Truman's "point four" proposals or those of the Colombo Plan, etc. And even here it is not at all clear that the social and statistical factors in question put the statesmen in a true ethical dilemma. Western statesmen know the general circumstances that Professor Hill describes and must take them into account. For they have other motives, besides humane concern, that prompt them to the framing of measures affecting Asian prosperity—desire to keep the undeveloped countries within the Western realm of "living-space", to prevent their engulfment by Communism, to safeguard the whole Western attitude to life; all these motives bind them, simply as statesmen, to regard the long-term welfare of these countries as important. They are, therefore, responsible for helping the new governments in any measures the latter may take to cope with their food and population problems, as a matter of political duty. Purely humane considerations only come in upon marginal issues arising out of investment plans, etc., or emergencies like flood and famine, in which a statesman or administrator has discretionary power, and can perhaps use or not use it to save life. But when he has such an opportunity it does not present itself to him as an ethical dilemma but as a moral imperative.

Leaving it to God

Professor Hill fully acknowledges this imperative. He also shrinks from any idea of resorting to such " methods of pure biology and racial improvement " as the Nazis adopted. He would doubtless second Bishop Newbigin's plea, in his address printed in this number, that the Western peoples be kept aware of this " gigantic problem ". Professor Hill preferred not to do more than allude to the controversial question of birth-control propaganda (which in any case only the local governments can answer) but he said that if the facts are as we cannot now doubt, the consequences must not be left to God. Indeed they cannot : we shall have both to suffer and to do our utmost to alleviate them and we may be thankful that science is there to help us. Not least should we be grateful for the foreknowledge which is now provided by the scientific methods of survey which have made us better aware of the population problem. For instance, we can now foresee with some certainty that the present rise in world population, occurring as it does mainly in the urban and not the rural areas, will continue to raise the " terms of trade " in favour of agricultural producers—i.e., the most industrialized peoples will have to work harder for their food.[1] This is but one case where scientific foresight, rightly acted upon, should enable us to cope better with a number of the consequences by preparing us to meet them. It remains true that all our human skill in dealing with nature, both within us and without, brings us to unexpected problems and hazards, makes fresh demands upon our courage and our faith. There are the ultimate realities that man cannot face without God. What science is doing to man, and what man ought to be doing with science, are realities of that order.

Repression of the Idea of God

Over-population is not new : like deforestation, soil-

[1] The point is well brought out by Mr. Colin Clark in his economic survey " Half-way to 1960 " in the *Lloyds Bank Review* of April last.

exhaustion and war itself, this is another of the age-old evils that our present culture has both magnified to world-dimensions and is bringing to everyone's consciousness. These are all the unlooked-for fruits of a great access of power and knowledge gained through some centuries when European man was escaping from insoluble religious problems by turning his attention outward, away from his inward needs and aspirations, to the investigation and control of the natural world around him. Up to a point this was a great and necessary steadying of the soul of Western man; but beyond that point a liability to over-balance, a passion for complete possession and mastery of the world of things. It can, and largely has, become an insatiable ambition, spurred on by nagging impulses from within, by forces of the soul that are still present and potent, though not understood or attended to. The enhanced powers are accordingly misapplied, as if they were ends in themselves. Because the sciences and the techniques they inspire are autonomous, their effects unco-ordinated and anarchic: clamour then arises for an omniscient overseer to harmonize the discordant powers and use them to human good. Thus Science and Government become the twin gods of the age, to which everyone is supposed to look for salvation. Does either know how to fulfil its responsibility? The scientist, in Professor Hill's own words, must disclaim ethical responsibility *qua* scientist, he can accept it only *qua* citizen—but that means in effect as government. Government accepts the responsibility, of course; such is its age-old *métier*; but what to do is a question that government passes back to Science. Or perhaps they agree on something, such as the U.N.O. plan for atomic power, only to discover that it cannot be done until all governments submit to a super government. But that is demanding something so omniscient, omnipotent and benevolent that it is very like asking for God in the wrong place. Or it is asking for something that presupposes a change in the wills of human beings which only God can bring about.

Limitations of Action

The *Freedom and Unity* group of Christians who have been studying this problem call attention to "the frightful alternative if things are not done and done quickly". When it comes to action, however, we of the West are too liable to forget that the authority of our culture in Asia and Africa is on a very different footing from what it was before 1939. The peoples of those continents are not asking us primarily for material good (look at Abadan!) but for equal status as nations. We have granted that equality in principle, and progressively in practice, but it is still their most passionate plea. If we take care to remember this, we shall not be so tactless as to insist that these peoples need above all to keep their numbers down. Even if they admitted that modern nations and races have henceforth consciously to limit population, that would be the last thing upon which they would want Western advice. It follows that our practical responsibility is limited to the humane duty of well-fed nations to assist those that are underfed. The exercise of this duty by governments and voluntary bodies has its own limitations, but we have not reached them yet. We must go on, not intimidated if the same scientific methods which give man new power over nature also disclose bounds that man cannot pass. This only means that scientific and technical powers are not everything; that service of them is no substitute for the very different ideals and disciplines implicit in our religious heritage.

Respect for the Soul

Science and government are our appointed means to do much of the ordering of our practical life. The future is for the peoples who will use them best. But these will be the people who see that these functions provide only means to action, never the wisdom to exercise them; who realize clearly that that wisdom will never be found by people who are trying to escape from themselves. It will not be found

by modern man until he regains his balance, attains to a revaluation of religion as well as of science and government. Western man knows that he is sick in soul, increasingly in danger of emotional instability. He begins even to suspect that he must somehow recover that respect for his own soul which has been repressed ever since the religious wars. A symptom of this, perhaps, is the tendency to return to institutional religion that is marked in America, and noticeable in other Western countries. Perhaps science itself may help, in the field of psychology, to reveal this neglect and atrophy of the faculties of the soul. That is a possibility that is now being explored by not a few Christian theologians and psychiatrists, including a group of the medical section of the Christian Frontier Council. For it is to be noted that when scientific method is turned inward upon man's subjective life, its discoveries do not, as in the case of physical science, produce means (or illusions?) of mastering the created world; they always disclose conditions to be fulfilled, realities that man has neglected and must obey. Such researches may lead, in time, to something of the first importance. Meanwhile, and more certainly, the need is for all Christian churches and fraternities to deepen their communal living. For nowhere else can man gain the personal strength and psychic health to confront the impersonal forces of the age.

The Crisis in Labour Policy

Let us look, in the light of what has been said, at the grave dissension which broke out at the Labour Party Conference a month ago. The moral drawn by most of the press commentators is that the sound, practical and rational leadership of the Party has been attacked and seriously imperilled by a wave of unrealistic emotion. There has been much condemnation of the orator who used his great demagogic power to arouse this destructive demonstration. Whatever may be said, however, about the responsibility he assumed, one is left with the feeling that his action did not

so much alter the situation as expose underlying forces of feeling which were bound to affect the whole future of the Labour movement, and would have done so no less dangerously—perhaps more so—if they had not been brought up to the surface but left to disintegrate it from below. It is certain that they cannot be disregarded. These forces are unconsciously—even sometimes half-consciously—displaced religious forces. One is often told, very truly, how much the organization of Labour has owed, in Britain, to the devoted service, instruction and fellowship of men and women from the Churches. We may well believe that this has done much for the unity, the morale and the disciplined intelligence of Labour in its rise to, and exercise of, national power. This, however, did not at all make the movement " religious ", but more soundly political. It is the middle-class intelligentsia, and the partly educated workers who follow their taste in ideas, who often transferred to this political movement the emotions and mentality proper to religion. The effect of aspirations thus misplaced is to invest limited and finite social faculties, such as government, production and distribution, with something ideal and absolute, regardless of mundane realities. In itself this is no novel phenomenon ; to cope with it is almost an abiding political problem. But when people arrive at or near the realities of power, emotional fixations of this kind work political havoc.

Aspiration and Adaptation

In conservative circles such fixations or idolatries are of a more static character, and not seldom are consciously confused with principles wrongly supposed to be religious. On both hands, our political activity loses in soundness and elasticity what it gains in prominence, from the weakness or absence of a religious background. It would be totally unrealistic to think that any remedy for this lay in a " return to religion " that was in any sense a retreat from politics. For one thing, the politics of the unchurched often contain

aspirations necessary to their spiritual existence, the development and education of which is an essential function of political life in our age. That is one reason why the present division in the ranks of Labour is so disquieting to every thoughtful citizen, whatever his own party loyalty ; and why it is earnestly to be hoped that the rift will yet be healed between the constructive and adaptive elements of the Left and its more dynamic minority.

The real challenge to the political health of this country to-day—which has occasioned though it did not cause the revolt in the ranks of Labour—is the need for reorientation of the economy and foreign policy of the nation, to meet its radically changed situation in the world. And one can think of nothing, at this moment, that seems more vital to this end than the speedy success of those leaders of Labour who are courageously grappling with the psychological difficulty of this situation ; who are working for the reconciliation of their whole party to the change of outlook required and the necessary revision of policies.

INTERIM

Expanding Agriculture

Of the papers given at the British Association meeting, one of the best worth reading was Sir William Slater's on *Science and an Expanding Agriculture*, published in *Nature*, September 13th. The increasing amount of research directed to the reclamation of arid lands, to the improvement of fertility and of yields both from crops and stock, has already produced knowledge which gives the most encouraging results where it is applied. The most striking and well-known instance is the introduction of ley farming in Britain, which we owe to the initiative of Sir George Stapledon. This revival, with improvements, of a much older method, has been so successful that the scientists have had to put in a deal of recent research to find out why the results so far surpass their expectations. But many discoveries, such as the discovery of the soil-ingredients lacking in some infertile soils, promise equally impressive results in the future.

Several factors militate against a sufficient recognition and use of the recent contributions to agricultural science, apart from mental resistance to new methods. One is that certain chemical and mechanical methods have been misused, often with bad results. There are also the rival, naturalistic schools of reform, whose methods have their own successes and are often more readily applicable. Alteration of established agricultural systems and of those who operate them is bound to be slow. Thus, while we are always in need of further knowledge, what we lack most is the will to apply it. It is a heartening truth that we do—or could—know how to relieve the worst anxiety about the human future ; but the challenging fact is that we are not yet using this knowledge. In Sir William Slater's words—

> " Increased food production will require great efforts and for a time sacrifices. Now more than at any other time in the world's history is that increase needed. Have we as a nation, has the world as a whole, the faith and the courage to set aside from our available supplies of trained men and materials those needed for the scientific expansion of agriculture ? On the answer to this question may rest the fate of mankind."

Is Atomic Fuel Necessary ?

Is it only on the further side of the iron curtain and not on this side that science gets hampered or corrupted by the political power ? The interesting monthly Bulletin of the Chicago Educational Foundation for Nuclear Science is constantly discussing the responsibilities and liberties of the scientist, in both communist and non-communist states. It does so upon a wealth of information and with an openness of mind not too easy to find among our own publications. A good while ago it printed articles arguing against the exploitation of uranium for industrial fuel, partly on grounds of the metal's relative scarcity and high cost, and of the unwisdom of needlessly using up the accessible reserves. Other scientists including Dr. Lilienthal have since discounted these objections, giving figures to show that " atomic energy is on a sound basis for an indefinite period."

But this defence has again been challenged in the Bulletin by Dr. Hans Thirring, head of the department of theoretical physics at Vienna University. He says it takes no adequate account of the huge increase in the world demand for power that is almost certain to occur, nor does it reckon fully with the scarcity of uranium deposits of sufficient concentration to be workable. Evidently he feels that our

technology is being hustled along a road that will end in our having squandered this " unique and literally irreplaceable gift of God ", by which time, perhaps, mankind will have some quite real need of it. Like not a few other scientists, Dr. Thirring denies that future sources of power are a serious human problem, or that nuclear fission is the reasonable solution of it. The energies, mental and material, now being expended on this work are politically and not industrially motivated ; nor have they the sanction of scientific conscience. If asked to tap new reservoirs of industrial power, the scientific answer would have been concerned with direct solar and hydraulic resources, not those of nuclear physics. Scientists as such are not specially responsible for the immense vested interest that is being built up around atomic technology. But it may cost them something, if they are physicists, to speak freely and conscientiously about it. " *Dixi et salvavi animam meam*," says Dr. Thirring, " I have said it to save my soul."

Germ Warfare

This is an unsavoury topic on which we have preferred to avoid comment. Advance publicity about the means to do ill deeds makes such deeds not less but more likely to be done : it may even constitute a kind of incitement. The situation is somewhat altered however since the appearance of the bulky report of a *soi-disant* International Scientific Commission bearing the signatures of several esteemed scientists and vouched for by the British member of the " commission ", Dr. Joseph Needham, F.R.S., of Cambridge. This report is an elaborate evaluation and confirmation of evidence collected in China to show that the United Nations forces in China have employed bacterial infection as a weapon. On the one hand we have heard an Anglican preacher recommend his congregation to study the book : on the other, various newspaper correspondents have asked for a proper investigation into its competence and good faith. The two ex-presidents of the Royal Society, however, have in a joint statement said that that Society cannot undertake any responsibility for such a statement because a member sponsors it ; moreover they say that to pronounce definitive judgment in this case would not be a primarily scientific problem, as the material question is not whether the Chinese allegations are couched in technically correct scientific language, but whether they are true. To assess their truth would require an investigation into " the impartiality and competence of the members of the

commission in drawing their main conclusions from evidence largely not scientific."

* * * *

But ought not such an assessment to be made? What is at issue is either a serious indictment of the U.N.O. high command in Korea or the open propagation of a calumny that is dangerous to the public safety. A correspondent of this journal says he considers it " obviously important that a full enquiry should be undertaken either by the government or by some influential society capable of obtaining the fullest expert knowledge. The charges are too serious and too circumstantial to be dismissed as propaganda. Either germ warfare has been employed or a deliberately faked series of incidents has been staged ". The latter has of course been strongly suggested by the refusal of the Chinese Communists to entertain any systematic enquiry not of their own invitation. But a report edited by a man of Dr. Needham's position must be fully and critically examined.

Frontier Luncheon

The next Frontier Luncheon will be held on Thursday, 11th December, from 12.45 to 2 p.m., in the Crypt of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square. The speaker will be Professor Michael Polanyi, F.R.S., and his subject " Social Illusions ". The versatility of Professor Polanyi's mind is shown by the fact that he has held successively the chairs of Physical Chemistry and of Social Studies in Manchester University. His best known book is *Science, Faith and Society*, the Riddell Memorial Lectures for 1946. The Chairman on 11th December will be Dr. Letitia Fairfield, O.B.E., formerly Senior Medical Officer of the London County Council.

Tickets (3s.) may be obtained from The Christian Frontier, 8 The Cloisters, Windsor Castle.

THE BACKGROUND OF CHURCH LIFE IN SOUTH INDIA

An Address given by Bishop Lesslie Newbigin at the Christian Frontier Luncheon on 19th September, 1952

WHEN I was invited to talk about frontier activity in South India my first reply was that we had none to speak of. Afterwards I reflected that, in the only real and fundamental sense of the words " frontier activity ", we have a good deal to speak about. I refer to the geographical extension of the frontier of Christendom, the preaching of the Gospel in places where the name of Christ is unknown, the gathering of believers together in places where the Church has not been, the spreading of the Lord's Table in places where it has never been spread. And, indeed, it is perhaps worth while to underline that, for that is indeed the fundamental and the essential Christian frontier. There is perhaps a danger that in our rightful enthusiasm about the great new fact of our time—a Church which can with some truth be described as world-wide—we may forget the great old fact that a vast proportion of the world's population is still completely out of ear-shot of the Gospel. I do not propose to say more about this, except that we would do well to remember that this is the primary Christian frontier.

With regard to that frontier with which the Christian Frontier here is most directly and immediately concerned—I mean that frontier on which every Christian layman stands when he is doing his daily work in the world—I think I must say that in South India we are following far behind you, although we are trying. For indeed one of the convictions which has come most strongly to us in South India since our union in one Church has been a fresh conviction, expressed in many different ways, that the task of evangelism is the task of the whole Christian body, and that therefore the training of the whole membership of the Church for

evangelism is one of the Church's primary responsibilities. In my own diocese, the theological seminary has been almost entirely turned over to the training of lay volunteers. We had the benefit of a visit from Dr. Kraemer, who greatly stimulated our efforts to bring together laymen in different walks of life to consider together their witness in their daily work. And this summer, under the leadership of Mr. Rajiah D. Paul, there has been a series of conferences for laymen in various professions in South India, which I believe have been extremely fruitful and which I hope will continue to bear more fruit.

Hunger in Asia

But in this meeting I felt that it might be useful if I spoke, not about that particular interpretation of the Christian frontier, nor in general about the life of the Church of South India, but of the society in which the Church is set and of the Church's place in it and contribution to it. Since the time is short and there are many things that one may truthfully say about that society, I am going to take the risk of appearing to ignore important things and say in one word what I think is the most important thing of all. That word is hunger. It seems to me that the overwhelmingly important fact, as I reflect upon the society in South India in which the Church is set, is the fact of hunger; the fact that the living conditions of millions of people in the villages of South India, as I have known them during a period of sixteen years, and which seemed to be unbelievably low when one first met them, are in many respects being pressed down still lower. I believe the same is true over the greater part of South-East Asia, with the exception of Thailand and Malaya, and that it is correct to say that the fifteen countries in East and South-East Asia, which contain 50 per cent of the world's population, are living on 9 per cent of the world's consumable resources. Taking India alone, the population is expected to increase from 350 million to 700 million in the next fifty years. There are few more important ethical and

political problems with which all Christians throughout the world ought to concern themselves at the present day than those which arise from that fact. That is the background of the daily work of the Church and the background of that immense political task which the leaders of the Indian republic have set themselves—the task of creating a democratic welfare state out of a population of 350 million with an electorate of 170 million—and it is also the background of the Communist movement which is gathering impressive strength, at least in South India.

Christianity and Marxism

In parenthesis, I would say that we do not find the simple correlation between hunger and Communism which writers and speakers in the West have so often assumed. A careful analysis of the election results in South India reveals that no single Communist was elected from a famine or deficit area, and that the Communists who were elected came entirely from urban areas or those rural areas which had an agricultural surplus. But without going into that in detail, I want to go on to say that all these things of which we are speaking are most deeply our concern, if for no other reason than that they are partly the result of that ferment which the Gospel sets up wherever it goes. Because education for the last hundred years in India has been dominated by ideas derived from Christianity and often by the figure of Jesus himself, no form of popular government is possible which does not in some sense accept the idea of the welfare state. Because Christian missions and Western government brought ideas and practices of medicine and health which had their ultimate roots in the Christian tradition, the death rate has been drastically reduced, and India is faced with a gigantic population problem. Because Christianity puts into men's minds a divine discontent with things as they are and a conviction that society ought to be justly and rationally ordered, the way is open for the tremendous appeal of Marxism.

Christian Sharing

When we face these gigantic issues and ask what can the Church do, it seems to me that in the first place the word Church must mean the Church throughout the world and nothing less, for nothing less than this is challenged by these facts. It is one of the major duties of the Church in our days to see to it that the Western half of the world does not go on in blind ignorance of how the Eastern half of the world is living. And it is, therefore, one of the principal jobs of a missionary on furlough to say just that, and it is the duty of the Churches to lay upon the consciences of all nations the absolute necessity of seeing to it that such things as the Colombo plan and its various allied and related plans do not fail, and that the Churches for their part do everything within their power in the sphere of personal and public opinion to see to it that they do not fail. The Churches themselves should be a channel of Christian sharing, and here I would mention how very great a factor in the situation it has been for us in South India that it has been possible for the Church to be the channel for bringing some of the generosity of the American Churches to the needy people in the villages of South India.

Now let me say something about the place of the Church in South India in relation to these facts. Clearly, a Church which is less than 3 per cent of the population cannot expect to exert strong direct influence. Its primary task must be evangelism. But what is the nature of the fellowship into which the Church by its evangelism invites men, and how is that fellowship related to the society of which I have been speaking? It seems to me that I must preface the answer to these questions by saying that there are two very vital differences between this kind of society (I am now talking of the villagers) and the situation with which we are familiar in the West. In the first place, it is a society in which people do not think of themselves as isolated, transferable, replaceable individuals, but as parts of groups—of communities which have moreover a more or less total control over

their living and thinking. And in the second place it is a society in which outside of the Church a religious tradition ultimately irreconcilable with Christianity rules. It often seems to a missionary working in that kind of situation a little amusing to find in the writings of Christians in the West a nostalgic longing for the " good old days " when these natural solidarities had not yet given way to the atomized individual, and a regret at the fact that the Churches in the West are surrounded by a large semi-Christian society. We have in Tamil a very good little proverb which, translated, says that " the grass on the other side of the river is always greener ". I can assure you that the Devil is able to handle primitive solidarities just as dexterously as he can handle atomized individuals ! And I suggest that the Churches in the West ought to be thankful that they are surrounded by a semi-Christianized society which takes off their hands an immense proportion of the loads which we often feel to be crushing but which we have to carry because we know if we do not they will be dealt with completely outside of any Christian influence. The Church in the West is to a very large extent left free to deal with its practising members and their religious concerns, whereas in the situation of which I am speaking the Church, if it is to exist at all, has to be a sort of total community which concerns itself with all who have been baptized and their descendants, and with all their concerns. It has to be a total community set within a society ruled by other convictions, and to concern itself with all those who in any sense can be called Christians, even if only because they are descended from Christians ; with their education, their healing, their economic welfare, their quarrels and their misdemeanours.

The Problem of Discipline

Let me be concrete. When a group in a village accepts baptism that is something which is significantly different from what happens when a person joins the Church in the situation of our Western Christendom. It involves a total

change of allegiance, becoming part of a completely new community, governed by new rules and customs at every point. In place of the old discipline of the Hindu *panchayat* they will now be under a completely new, different system in which elders, pastors, bishops, diocesan courts will be exercising a completely different kind of discipline. The change becomes clearer in this matter of Christian discipline than in any other matter. In such a situation as, for instance, that of the Churches in South India, a Church without effective discipline becomes salt without savour, indistinguishable from the pagan mass around it. In a society where the distinction between private life and public life hardly exists, discipline must be public discipline or no discipline at all. So suspension, excommunication, reconciliation and restoration are public acts to which the whole Church is party. This arises from the very nature of the Church. But it also creates intensely difficult problems. Villagers may submit, but people of wealth and education will not submit so easily. I don't mean that it is easier for a villager than for a townsman to accept discipline from his fellows, but that it is easier for a townsman to impose Christian discipline on a villager than on a fellow-townsman. People get into situations in which they are prepared to fight, prepared to call in the civil law to prevent ecclesiastical law from functioning and determined to fight quarrels out in the civil court. And then the Church has to decide either that there is one law for the village and one for the town, one law for the rich and another for the poor, which is intolerable ; or it has to insist, to the point of suspension and excommunication, that the Church shall have the discipline of its members. And yet, as the Church grows in size and unity, one can well imagine that this creates extremely difficult problems—problems with which most of us (at least those who come out as missionaries from the West) are very ill-equipped to deal. What is the kind of machinery by which the Church is to exercise this discipline ? What is the canon law which is relevant to that situation, and which is truly evangelical ?

What is the difference of procedure between a Church court and a civil court? Clearly there must be a difference, but what is the procedure which is faithful both to the Gospel and to the rules of equity and justice? There is also the real danger of developing a sort of clerical totalitarianism and of losing the liberty of the Gospel in a new legalism. We are working in a society in which the whole conception of a difference between the Church and civil society does not yet exist, and the question of the form in which it can come to exist is a question that raises the deepest problems.

Furthermore, as you can well understand, the whole issue is sharpened by the fact of being only one Church. In any village or town there is normally only one congregation. There are many occasions in which the local Church disunity has a certain usefulness! It enables us to evade elementary problems about mutual forgiveness. But when you are in a situation where in any village or town there is only one church, the members of which must either forgive one another or publicly forego their membership in the Body of Christ, then you are in a situation where you cannot evade the fundamental problem of community. In such a situation you are brought up against agonizingly difficult struggles, but precisely in this situation it is, thank God, over and over again demonstrated that the Cross of Jesus Christ is the one place where mercy and truth have met together, where righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

The Ultimate Appeal

It seems to me that it is precisely at this point that the word that the Church can say to Communism in our day is being said and has to be said. In the last analysis, the ultimate sin of Communism from a Christian point of view is self-righteousness. It is the existence of a community in which forgiveness is a fact, in which righteousness has not become self-righteousness, and peace has not become appeasement, but in which, as only at the Cross of Jesus Christ, righteousness and peace have kissed each other—

it is when that is visibly incarnated in the heart of each natural community that there is before men's eyes the answer to Communism. And it is as I try, ineffectively I fear, to deal with the members of my own flock, mill workers in Madhurai, peasants in the villages, upon whom Communism understandably exerts a most tremendous pressure, that this becomes more and more clear to me. They are in a position where, both because of their poverty and insecurity and because the Gospel has given them a conviction that things can be and ought to be different, they are more exposed than almost anyone else to the full pressure of the Communist appeal. It seems to me that the only answer to that appeal which can be given (and which, thank God, in a measure is being given) is the existence of a community in which at a local level, which is the only real level, the ultimate question, "How can men and women live together in righteousness and peace?" is being answered in practice. At that very point in the life of the local community where there is so much which is sordid, discouraging and trivial—the answer, if we will see it, is being given, the answer which will allow us to say in the face of the world that we have in our Lord Jesus Christ the centre around which alone all men can be made one.

LESSLIE NEWBIGIN, *Bishop.*

THE SOCIAL CONTENT OF SALVATION

THE Christian Gospel is that salvation has been brought down from heaven to earth, that it is possible for the eternal life of God to become incarnate in the historically conditioned lives of men and women on earth. This means that, while the soul of salvation is eternally the same, its body is always changing. The particular ideal of life which in any age translates into a pattern of concrete social relationships the fulfilment of the human spirit in God, requires to be re-defined with every fundamental change in the structure of society. Salvation becomes disembodied, and therefore irrelevant (for it is through the body alone that men perceive the soul), when this redefinition is not made. And the fact that it has not yet been fully made to-day lies at the root of the ineffectiveness of much present-day evangelism. What, in terms of his contemporary society, has a man to be delivered from and enabled to become, if salvation is to appear to him a relevant offer? Unless religious salvation at least includes social salvation, it is a thing without body and without power. Religion may offer a man a place and purpose in the ultimate scheme of things, but he is not likely to be remotely interested in it, unless he can see it as giving him in the first instance a place and purpose in the immediate social setting in which he lives. It is when he sees the Gospel discovering to him social salvation, that is, a position in society in which he really finds himself, where he counts, is of value, and can make a difference, that a man may begin to understand a Gospel promising him "right standing" with God. The content of social salvation—what a man has to become in order to find fulfilment as a member of society—differs from society to society. Christianity must take account of these changes, as in the past it has done so, if it is to continue to offer salvation from and to the things that are socially really relevant.

For the purposes of defining the content of social salvation, one can divide the types or stages of society into three main classes.

(1) *Pre-scientific Society*

Economically the basic fact here is man's *dependence* on nature for his livelihood. The key idea, therefore, for the understanding of its character is that of dependence. Society is hierarchical in structure, one class depending on another and in its turn having others dependent on it, in a system of graded privilege and responsibility. It is typified in Hindu caste-society and Western feudalism, and its structure still survives in the armed forces, where, like the centurion of old, the officer is a man under authority, having soldiers under him. Social salvation, becoming, that is, a significant member of this society, acquiring value and the power to count in it, meant finding a place of dependence or a function, however mean, in the social organism. The outcaste, the serf, the slave had no status in it. They possessed no rights; they were *aprosopoi*, without personality. They never became what it meant to be fully human in such a setting. For social salvation lay in acquiring some dependent status or function as a member, or limb, of the body politic, on which in turn the health of the whole depended.

When the Church proffered salvation to this society, it held out to men what made possible also their ideal of social salvation. What it bestowed, of course, was not outward caste: it did not make every villein into a bailiff, every slave into a freeman. But it gave, as an inward possession to all, whether lord, bailiff or serf, the consciousness of mattering, of having, of inalienable spiritual right, even if not of physical fact, that place and freedom as a *member* of an organic structure in which social salvation lay. And it did this because it held out to him incorporation into an organism. For this reason its Gospel appeared relevant. It spoke to men of becoming members or limbs of a Body: it offered them value as functional parts of the Corpus Christi. It knew that salvation, if it were to have any appeal, must show men the way to become, not individuals (that was not yet the social ideal), but dependent members of a Whole. For such incorporation mass conversion was the adapted technique

and the " dependent " virtues of poverty, chastity (" yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness ") and obedience were the ideal of perfection.

(2) *Capitalist Society*

Economically the basic fact here is the discovery of man's *independence* and power to control and manipulate nature for his own ends. The dominant concept, therefore, is that of independence, social salvation lying, not in becoming a dependent member, but in becoming an individual. It is as such that a man acquired value in capitalist society, the power to count and to make a difference. Rights were grounded in the individual, and pre-eminently in the individual as freeholder. These " rights of man " were conceived as anterior to any social organization, whose origin and *raison d'etre* rested in a voluntary association to ensure the inviolability of property and to remove any hindrances to absolute freedom of contract. To have " a stake in the country ", which was the basis of the franchise, meant to own capital or the means of production.[1] Power lay in economic independence. Every man's aim was to " make good ", so that he could stand on his own feet. The ethic of this society was individualistic and its virtues the exact opposite to those of dependence—business success rather than poverty earning the Divine blessing, while self-expression and private enterprise superseded the mediaeval values of chastity and obedience. Social salvation meant, as the novels of Dickens so clearly illustrate, the rescuing of men to become individuals out of the mass of the proletariat who had no " name " or identity, no power to count in society, because they had no capital.

[1] It is ironical that the last vestige of capitalist electoral privilege (the business premises vote) has recently disappeared at the same time as, and with far less opposition than, the last vestige of feudal parliamentarianism (the representation of the universities as " communes " of the realm).

At the Reformation the Church made the break which allowed it to speak the Divine redemption in terms which accorded with this redefinition of social salvation. While Protestantism defaulted disastrously in its gospel to society, its message of salvation for the individual was at all events relevant. The new religious ideal was, in Kirkegaard's words (who in his politics and ideological assumptions, if in nothing else, was so clearly a child of his age), "to become an individual before God". Protestantism afforded to every man a personal Saviour, and by its insistence that Christ died for him individually, assured him an eternal value in the sight of God. Be he a cipher in the Political Arithmetic of this age, he could confidently hope to be counted among the number of the elect. With this new ideal of salvation went inevitably an individualist piety and an individualist ethic; and, on the left wing of the Protestant movement at any rate, the notion of a "gathered Church" and of congregational autonomy superseded the *Una Sancta* of Catholicism. And the change of goal was accompanied by a change of technique. In place of mass conversion of serfs or outcastes to incorporation in a Body, was put the rescuing of individual souls, "plucked from the burning" of the submerged classes to be given value and self-respect as brothers for whom Christ died.

(3) *Socialized Society*[2]

The features of this type of society are not yet finally clear, but certain definite things can be said about it. In an important sense it is a synthesis of the two previous types. Its

[2] A "socialized" society should be distinguished from a "socialist" society. It is a matter of sheer economic fact that the world is moving into an ordering of society which, whatever its political complexion, is bound in large degree to be socialized. As opposed to this fact, socialism is a theory, or an ideology, produced by the change in society to explain it, justify it and speed it. In exactly the same way, the economic and political theories of Locke and Adam Smith, Tom Paine and Bentham were produced (albeit largely unconsciously) by the capitalist revolution to explain it, justify it and speed it.

basic economic reality is neither dependence nor independence, but interdependence. The days of *laissez-faire* are gone for ever; the elbow-room has disappeared in which a man could "do what he liked with his own" without denying the same liberty to others. The brute fact of our economic interdependence in "one world" is borne home upon us ever more pressingly. Neutrality and isolationism are becoming impossible. If we are to survive at all, it is clear that it can only be as "members one of another", in the responsible freedom of a community where all care for each and each works for all. The line between private and public is blurring. It is the age of planning, of the social service state and corporate ownership. While the virtues of dependence and obedience are at a discount and the standards of individual morality are crumbling, yet the consciousness of social interdependence and mutual responsibility has undoubtedly been strengthened. In place of the feudal thesis of slavish dependence and the capitalist antithesis of selfish independence, the ideal is of a freedom found in the reciprocity of community service.

But this ideal is threatened by a slavery more terrible, because more totalitarian, than that which hung over either of the other two types of society. Never was social salvation a more urgent postulate than it is for modern man. But this salvation is neither from the political submergence of the outcaste, the slave and the serf to membership of the Corpus, nor from the economic submergence of the industrial proletariat to self-conscious individuality. Political and economic democracy have in principle been attained. But such democracy may still leave a man with the frustrating realization that he has no value in his society, no power to count or make significant difference to it. Only too easily may he be drowned in the mass, swallowed up in impersonality. Redemption for him means being released to become a person —not an individual, because in independence he is powerless in face of the all-controlling State—but a person, who may find rather than lose himself in the interdependence of

the community. The " They " depersonalizes : a man achieves personality, or is redeemed to it, when he discovers himself addressed and treated as a " Thou " and can respond in the same way in his relationships to others. The content of social salvation for the modern man is to discover himself as a person, as one who freely chooses interdependence because his nature is to be made for others, rather than as one engulfed in it because the pressures of his age demand it.

The Church's chance of claiming the socialized society upon which we are entering depends on whether it can speak its Gospel of redemption in terms of this new content of social salvation. Can it show men that through Christianity, and through Christianity alone, they can truly become persons, as mediaeval Catholicism held out to them the goal of incorporation in a Body, and reformation Protestantism the possibility of becoming individuals before God ?

If it is to achieve this it will need to re-examine radically its evangelistic method. It is clear that neither mass conversion nor the saving of a man out of and apart from his environment is nowadays possible or desirable. It is not desirable because neither technique treats him as a person or builds him into one : it is not possible because economically and socially it is only as a person and to become a person that to-day he can be saved if he is to be saved at all. This means that conversion must be through and through a community affair. For a man becomes a person when he discovers himself in the *I-Thou* relation of community, and in actual experience grasps with the total response of his being that he has been made for, and has his only centre in, other persons.

This means a rethinking, not only of the technique of evangelism, but also of its goal—the Church. It is impossible to rest either with the mediaeval interpretation of the Church as the Corpus Christi, which preceded the individual and into which he is simply engrafted, or with the later Protestant conception of it as the gathered congregation, which exists only as the result of an aggregation of individuals.

The terms person and community are correlative. One cannot be the prius of the other, because persons exist only in community and community means nothing more than persons being persons. For an indication of the lines along which this redefinition of the Church must be made, one could refer to T. O. Wedel's striking book, *The Coming Great Church*.

Mention of this book, steeped as it is in the new Biblical theology, may serve to dispel the fears that such a reinterpretation means a trimming of the Gospel to the requirements of an alien sociology. It is in fact precisely those who have made the return to the Bible and rediscovered the centrality of the Kingdom and the Church who have most to offer to this generation. Indeed, it is a profound confirmation of the working of the grace and power of God that, as man's sin grows more titanic, the dialectic of economic forces should have produced a series of societies in which the definition of social salvation comes to approximate, through thesis, antithesis and synthesis, more closely to the true content of eternal salvation. The social order at present emerging may contain within it potentialities of destruction and dehumanisation of which any previous order was incapable. On the other hand, it must be recognized that the particular conceptions of community, personality, freedom, responsibility, and morality required as the content of true salvation within it are in fact closer to the Christian definition of these things than those demanded by either the pre-scientific or capitalist societies. Moreover, if God gave to the Church so to interpret its Gospel of salvation as to fulfil both the one-sided social ideals of incorporation and individualism, then surely He may be trusted to empower His followers to present it now, when society demands it, in what *can be* the more fully Christian terms of redemption to personal community.

But while eternal salvation has to be presented in terms of the content of social salvation to be relevant, the two are never to be identified. The Church must always declare

that the social ideal is not self-sufficient: it must relate it to an ultimate responsibility to, and fufilment in, God, and assert that in fact it can be attained only as a by-product of this further relation. It has to preach Divine salvation in terms, indeed, of the peculiar salvation relevant to the order of society to which it speaks, but it has to proclaim that salvation as something that gains its relevance, not from society, but from God. Through the Gospel men must be led to discover their lives to be meaningful in society, but yet as meaningless apart from God.

The righteous, the socially saved, do not want this Gospel: it is foolishness to them. It is to the socially outcaste, submerged and depersonalized, that the Word of the Cross can come with power. It offers them the true caste, individuality and personality—but only by One who is crucified by caste, outlawed and extinguished by society. In St. Paul's paradox, in order to establish the Divine righteousness (salvation from the hand of God), the Gospel of the Cross destroys the righteousness of the Law (self-sufficient social salvation)—only to confirm the Law, by affording, as a by-product, genuine salvation in society. The Gospel *does* give men meaning and fulfilment in society, and unless it is preached in terms of the particular content of this social salvation it becomes irrelevant; but it tells them that this is to be had, not by seeking it, but by losing it, not by striving and works, but by faith and grace. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you."

JOHN ROBINSON.

A LETTER FROM THE RUSSIAN ZONE

(First published in *Christ und Welt*, August 28th, 1952. The Russian Zone authorities first announced that a contingent of 25,000 Evangelicals would be allowed to attend the recent Stuttgart Assembly—the fourth in the series, Hanover, Essen, Berlin, Stuttgart—but later revoked their decision and rejected all applications. The writer of this letter was one of the 25,000.)

August 10th, 1952.

My Dear Friend,

To-morrow a friend of mine is travelling to Berlin. (This narrow door to you is still open. But for how much longer, I wonder ?) If all goes well, this letter will reach you by air. It almost makes me happy to be able to write down without uneasiness what I have to say, what I must say, all the things that long to be released from the tormenting constraint of the silent monologue within. But a letter can be no more than an insipid substitute for a personal meeting with you and all the other friends on the other side.

How tremendously we had looked forward for months to the day of departure for Stuttgart. We had lived for that day. Can you imagine what it felt like ? Perhaps not. But think back to the war and what it meant to be promised leave at Easter or Christmas and then have it cancelled at the last minute. All your thoughts and feelings had as it were travelled on in advance. It is terribly difficult to order back such a tumultuous, excited (and perilously exposed) *avant garde*. And that 's what we have just been required to do.

When we said, "*Au revoir*" in Stuttgart, last year at the end of the Evangelical Assembly in Berlin, I smiled as one does when trying to hide a slight pain. To tell you the truth : I didn't believe in Stuttgart. I never thought we should be allowed to travel in hundreds of thousands to Swabia. But in the end it was decided that 25,000 should go. And I was to be one of them. At first I thought I ought to

give my place in the party to someone else but I couldn't bring myself to make the sacrifice. The joy of anticipation drove all such scruples into a corner. All our troubles at work and home dwindled into nothing at the thought of Stuttgart. Naturally we were a bit afraid. Would the Government keep its word and really let us go? But, wishful thinkers as we human beings are, we put the evil possibility that they might alter their decision right out of our minds.

Finally, however, the news came through: the Government had refused to issue us with passports. That set our teeth on edge but some of us still hoped to get individual permits. Not one of us succeeded. They will open the frontier only if a close relative is dying "on the other side". All the same, I would have set out for West Berlin and asked you and other friends to pay my fare by air to Stuttgart (I am a bit ashamed to tell you that now). Only it would have been quite impossible to cover up my absence here. Even for short journeys we have to give the police notice. No, I couldn't have risked it unless I had made up my mind to clear out for good as so many others have done. Why don't I clear out? Well, as you know, my livelihood is here and a bit more than that too, so that I have enough to buy an occasional piece of furniture or some clothes. As a member of the "technical intelligentsia" I am well in with the authorities. But you know too what a terrible burden we are labouring under here: the lack of freedom of speech and the daily suppression of reason and conscience. Always having to gag our own mouths, to be cunning and cowardly, to knuckle under and be secretive all the time is terrible and hellish. And on top of all that the suffocating isolation from you, from the world, from the truth (how much longer shall we dare to listen to the West German radio?). If they close the frontier to West Berlin, as we are afraid they will, all the doors will be shut on us.

What keeps me here, then? My wife, the children? Am I afraid of the camps and hutments we should have to

stay in to begin with, the insecurity, the suffering, the worry? No, it 's not that at all. As far as the children are concerned it would be better to leave to-day rather than to-morrow. It is getting more and more difficult for us to protect them from the lies and from becoming used to this hollowed-out existence. Is it love for the home country that keeps us here? Perhaps. But the destruction and pulverizing of all traditional values—of property, civic pride, law—have already made us fundamentally homeless. The house and the familiar furniture, the familiar streets and the beloved countryside are not enough to call "home". Home, real home can exist only for free men. But in spite of everything I am still trying to resist the ghastly lack of ties and associations which lack of freedom brings about. And I shall cling to the last remaining walls of the old values as long as I have the strength. That 's why I am singing small, knuckling under, eating the dust we are ordered to eat.

I may have put all this clumsily but you may understand what I am trying to say. I was hoping to talk it all over with you and the others in Stuttgart. And then I would have listened to you (please forgive us for always wanting to speak first—but I told you already what a release it is for us to be able to talk at all). It would have been so important for me to listen to what you had to say. I had thought of thousands of questions. The day must not be allowed to come when we shall no longer understand each other because you will have no chance to explain yourselves to us. I am afraid of that day. It would make us utterly lonely and might drive us mad. God forbid that it should ever come.

For you as for us Stuttgart was not intended to be a day of national unity, a demonstration of our common faith in political freedom—but rather a day of the Church and the Evangelical faith, a demonstration of our fellowship in the Gospel. And we folk in the Eastern Zone have come to see one thing very clearly: the Gospel is the source from which human freedom is fed and from which, whether we like it or not, our longing for freedom is derived. So long

as it remains the Church of Jesus Christ, the Church cannot be harnessed to a political plan—any more with us than with you. The problem of humanity or inhumanity, of political and social intentions and actions can be solved only in the fiery ordeal of the Gospel. Judged by the Gospel slavery will always be rejected as inhumanity. God intended and created man to be free. We Christians in the Eastern Zone are free and will remain free because we know our freedom is hidden in God. But the freedom of the Christian longs to be lived, to be effective.

Faith is the root from which our deep longing for law and freedom grows. For the sake of the Gospel we pray for the strength to endure. As long as you in the West and we in the East are able, despite all the barriers, to bear and to live the one Church and fellowship of Christ, so long we shall not be lost. But it depends on your strength as well as ours. In Stuttgart you will be without us for the first time. But we are waiting for the invigorating streams to reach us. Are we hoping for too much? If we are then let us pray for a miracle.

My dear friend, we may not hear from one another for a long time. It will be up to us both to prove whether it is true that fellowship in the Faith is stronger than the walls that are being raised up between us.

Yours very sincerely,

XXX.

REVIEWS

The Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible. Nelson, 30s.

This is not a new translation of the Bible but a revision of the Authorized Version. It is a great improvement on the Revised Version of 1884 both because, in correcting mistranslations and in removing archaisms, it has maintained a much higher literary quality and because it is based on what is now considered to be the best original text. It is the work of a strong team of American scholars, but there is little about it that is peculiarly American. Many readers in England have already come to value the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament (which was published in 1946) above all other English versions, and have been eagerly waiting for this complete Bible. It is beautifully printed and will make an ideal Christmas present.

Industrial Leadership and Joint Consultation. By W. H. Scott. University Press of Liverpool, 12s. 6d.

This analysis of joint consultation and human relations in three Merseyside factories employing 3,500, 2,500 and 900 workers shows that "no system of joint consultation will work unless the total situation in the firm is right". How difficult it is to get the total situation right and how far we are from it even in well-meaning and efficient firms like the three taken for study is convincingly shown. Management's attitude is still paternalistic, regarding joint consultation as a means for the workers to let off steam rather than as a two-way encounter in which the attitudes and perspectives of management are involved along with those of the workers. The following is typical: "Mr. F. stated that his Committee felt that the management could make more use of the Council. . . . Management responded by suggesting lateness and factory cleanliness as items for discussion and action"—an opportunity lost to interest the workers' Council in production or the policy of the firm. Another bad habit of management is to shelve awkward questions put to it through the firm's Council. Hence it is not surprising to learn that not more than 10 per cent of employees take any interest and that there is "definite reluctance to stand for election". Joint consultation seems to work best where the trade unions are already strong and given full recognition by management. This enables the shop stewards to act as the workers' representatives and so to tie up the two lines of authority—downward from management to the supervisor, upwards from the workers to the shop stewards.

The importance of management's behaviour cannot be exaggerated. If this is not good, it may lead joint consultation towards an actual deterioration in employee relations. If there is distrust, formal consultation may spread it. Where relations are so good that informal consultation takes place at every level as a routine, formal consultation may be unnecessary. In the cases investigated it seems doubtful whether joint consultation has in fact done more good than harm. But if it convinces management that "confidence is indivisible" joint consultation as now practised should lead by its very inadequacy to a more radical consideration of industrial relations and so pave the way for real two-way communication at every level.

This study brings out the preoccupation of the average worker with what is closest to him—his relations with his foreman and supervisor whose selection and training is one side of the equation of good industrial relations; the other being real leadership from the top. In the three firms management was remote from the worker and did not sufficiently consult supervisors and foremen. Clearly we have a long way to go in bringing the worker in industry into a responsible and socially creative relationship to his work.

The World of Silence. By Max Picard. Translated by Stanley Godman. Harvill Press, 12s. 6d.

Gabriel Marcel's introduction to this book calls its author a prophet in the sense that Bloy and Péguy are prophets. In fact he is not, anything like so stormily as they, wrestling with the world he denounces. He is extricated from it, as it were, standing apart from the din and turmoil and successfully trying to create, by evocative language, a spell of silence around his readers and himself. His purpose is pure Christian contemplation. He wants to awaken the sense of that Silence in which the Word may be born, the infinite *virginitas immaculata* which is the ground and possibility of all meaning; the scene of the miraculous birth of language. This is not, then, merely a book to read: it is more like a series of meditations preparatory to prayer.

Understanding Europe. By Christopher Dawson. Sheed & Ward, 16s. 0d.

"Not a continent but a society of peoples", a culture united by the same religious traditions, divided by an intense regionalism, a variegated community with millenial experiences of co-operation and conflict often issuing in great achievements—that is Christopher Dawson's vision of Europe. This group of his essays has the pro-

found scholarship and quietly prophetic power that we now expect of him. He elucidates the obscurer causes of Europe's present loss of nerve, also those of the outside world's loss of faith in Europe, and the resulting perilous revolt against all European authority. Mr. Dawson makes his readers face many appalling facts, but he never admits that the sum adds up to certain perdition. On the contrary, he sees it as a challenge that ought to inspire these nations with a higher consciousness of their common life and vocation. He makes us feel that reintegration is a possibility if we can but realize that Europe is not a thing we have to create : that it is a reality only half-submerged by the errors of its past, which can yet emerge and flourish anew if those errors are but fully acknowledged, repented of and amended.

Man's Search for Health: A Study in the Inter-relation between Religion and Medicine. By Phyllis L. Garlick. The Highway Press, 15s. od.

Miss Garlick deals with her subject factually and historically, from the most primitive origins of medicine in magic to the latest methods of " radio-active tracer " diagnosis. Her survey gives much information about the history of the medical art in the classical world, in Africa, China and India. It also shows how the influence of the higher religions, pre-eminently that of Christianity, led the way to the elimination of the magical in medicine. The subsequent alliance between Christianity and scientific medicine is followed by the story of the world-wide dissemination of medical science through Christian missions, leading up to the present days when there are medical councils, whose concerns extend to preventive medicine, to population and nutritional problems and, incidentally to the " dilemma " discussed in this issue's Monthly Letter. Altogether a good, realistic study of an old subject, written from a soundly Christian standpoint and with eyes turned to the future.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

THE NEW PROLETARIANS

Dear Sirs,

My husband is a lorry-driver and neither of us have any experience of life " on the bench ", but we should agree whole-heartedly with most of what John and Mary said in the September number of *The Frontier*—and yet there will always be psychologically a difference

between them and us. However much they may identify themselves with their present surroundings, they do know they haven't GOT to, and there could be an escape route! And then it is so very true, as John and Mary point out, that the educated man is better equipped to face the evil effects of drudgery, whereas WE are faintly aware of all that lies in the world of the intellect and arts, but are prevented by lack of training and sheer physical weariness ever to be able to reach out and enjoy them. "Laziness is not one of the workers' vices"—agreed a thousand times!

We should agree completely with John and Mary about the poisonous attitude to marriage and home life. In this road practically every council house holds gran. and two or three young married couples. The wives continue to work and if there is a child, gran. looks after it. They haven't much aim besides "paying on" furniture and they go on taking the pleasures that under these conditions they can still afford. Then they get a house, and they both continue to work to pay the rent and gran. again has the children while they go out to the pictures, the dance halls and the pubs. There is no sacrifice for each other, no companionship, no spiritual backing to awaken their thoughts. They mix up in a fun-loving crowd in which they lose all sense of one man for one woman.

John is right in finding real slums less depressing than a housing estate. The really poor "muck in". They'll cut your throat with their tongues, but save your soul with their kindnesses.

We try ourselves to do a bit of visiting other people on the estate and *they* come to *us*. We have good opportunities for this as my husband is treasurer of a savings group and churchwarden of our church. We do find that people talk to us about their problems and we do what we can to think about them, helped by some of the books from the church library. I came back to the Church towards the end of the war; my husband first came into it when he got back from Burma. Now we are trying to break down the dreadful barrier which exists between St. R's and most of our neighbours and it can be done only by working people and lots more Johns and Marys who choose to become working-class people. We were overjoyed to receive the mental stimulus of their article.

Yours sincerely,

S.

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